



UPPER IOWA UNIVERSITY

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ONLINE PROGRAM

*Strategic Issues in Online Program
Implementation, A Best Practices Approach*

International Assembly for Collegiate
Business Education

Presenter: Dave Binder, Online Program
Director, Upper Iowa University

Online Program Implementation: Considerations and Issues

- ↓ Key Issues:
 - ↓ Why?
 - ↓ Market
 - ↓ Structure
 - ↓ Learning Model
 - ↓ Platform
 - ↓ Lessons Learned Shared
- ↓ No one answer fits all ... each institution is unique

Online Program Implementation: Why?

↓ Percent of HE Institutions with Online Programs *

↓ Public 2-year CC and TC: 88%

↓ Private 2-Year: 12%

↓ Public 4-year: 86%

↓ Private NFP 4-year: 40%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Education: "The Condition of Education 2006, Indicator 47" (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2006/pdf/47_2006.pdf)

↓ Online Programs: Number at Private NFP 4-year institutions > Public 4-year

↓ New entrants are "last in" to a crowded market

↓ Lots of online programs, many with a lot of resources (next slide)

* Courses or full degrees with 80%+ of course content delivered online - typically have no face-to-face meetings.

Online Program Implementation: Why?

- ↓ Major players
 - ↓ University of Phoenix *
 - ↓ University of Maryland University Campus
 - ↓ University of Massachusetts Online
 - ↓ Penn State World Campus
 - ↓ Strayer University *
 - ↓ Capella University *
 - ↓ Walden University *
 - ↓ Many, many others

*** For Profit Institution**

Online Program Implementation: Why? On the other hand ...

↓ Expected undergraduate enrollment growth
2004-2015 (nationally) about 1.2% annually

Source: U.S. Dept. of Education "The Condition of Education 2006, Table 9-1"

↓ 2004 Online enrollment growth about 18-20%,
rate increasing (one estimate is 35% for 2005)

Sources: Sloan Consortium and Eduventures

↓ Therefore, on-campus enrollments under pressure

↓ If your on-campus enrollment is increasing, probably
taking market share away from someone else

Online Program Implementation: Why? On the other hand ...

↓ Can an institution survive without an Online Program?

↓ 12% fewer private 4-year institutions in 2004 than in 1997 (more lost since then)

Source: U.S. Dept. of Education: "The Condition of Education 2004"

↓ Chief Academic Officers say:

ONLINE EDUCATION IS CRITICAL TO THE LONG-TERM STRATEGY OF MY INSTITUTION

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Agree	48.8%	53.5%	56.0%	58.4%
Neutral	38.1%	33.7%	30.9%	27.4%
Disagree	13.1%	12.9%	13.1%	14.2%

Source: Sloan "Making the Grade: Online Education in the United States, 2006"

Online Program Implementation: Markets

↓ First strategic decision

- ↓ Market served must be consistent with institutional mission

ONLINE EDUCATION REACHES STUDENTS NOT SERVED BY FACE-TO-FACE PROGRAMS

	Public	Private, nonprofit	Private, for-profit
Agree	79.4%	67.9%	68.1%
Neutral	16.8%	29.4%	23.4%
Disagree	3.7%	2.7%	8.5%

Chief Academic Officers (Source: Sloan "Making the Grade: Online Education in the United States, 2006")

Online Program Implementation: Markets

- ↓ First strategic decision
 - ↓ Generic Market Choices
 - ↓ Current On-Campus/Learning Center Students
 - ↓ Regional outreach
 - ↓ National outreach
 - ↓ International outreach
 - ↓ UIU chose international outreach
 - ↓ existing DL program in that market
 - ↓ existing learning partners in overseas markets

Online Program Implementation: Markets



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- ↓ Curriculum
 - ↓ Full degrees or “selected courses?”
 - ↓ If degrees, which ones?

ONLINE OFFERINGS - FALL 2005

	Public	Private, nonprofit	Private, for-profit
Online program	46.1%	20.8%	23.0%
Courses only	44.5%	25.8%	17.2%
No online	9.4%	53.4%	59.8%

Source: Sloan “Making the Grade: Online Education in the United States, 2006”

Online Program Implementation: Markets

- ↓ Market choice affects curriculum choice
 - ↓ UIU Online Program offers full degrees only
 - ↓ Delayed launch for regional accreditor approval
- ↓ Tuition
 - ↓ Lower than, equal to or higher than onground courses?
 - ↓ UIU chose to price online offerings at a premium to its center based programs

Online Program Implementation: Structure

- ↓ Organizational Placement
 - ↓ Separate “profit center”
 - ↓ Cost center (like facilities)
 - ↓ Stand-alone
 - ↓ Within campus IT department
 - ↓ Within academic department(s)

Online Program Implementation: Structure

- ↓ Online Program Structure depends on answer to placement
 - ↓ Own staff?
 - ↓ Own faculty?
 - ↓ Curriculum control?
 - ↓ Support functions?
 - ↓ Financial Aid
 - ↓ Registrar
 - ↓ Text book supply
 - ↓ Etc.

Online Program Implementation: Learning Model

- ↓ Every program has a learning model, whether or not it is what one would choose upon reflection
- ↓ Issues
 - ↓ Faculty mediated vs. computer mediated?
 - ↓ Nature and extent of required in-class student participation?
 - ↓ Maximum and minimum class size?
 - ↓ Testing – proctored or not?
 - ↓ Mixed online/in-class (“blended”)?
 - ↓ Nature of evaluative assignments?
 - ↓ Synchronous vs. Asynchronous communication?
 - ↓ Stream audio and/or video?
 - ↓ Include collaborative assignments (virtual teaming)?

Online Program Implementation: Platform (“LMS”)

- ↓ Market, structure, learning model should drive platform (Learning Management System) choice ... not the reverse
- ↓ Two generic types of platforms
 - ↓ Browser based (AKA “Web based”)
 - ↓ BlackBoard
 - ↓ WebCT
 - ↓ eCollege
 - ↓ Angel
 - ↓ Moodle
 - ↓ Dozens of others including “home brew”
 - ↓ Client-server
 - ↓ Outlook Express
 - ↓ First Class
 - ↓ Lotus Notes/Domino

Online Program Implementation: Platform (“LMS”)

- ↓ Browser based (AKA “Web based”)
 - ↓ Advantages
 - ↓ No special software needed by students
 - ↓ Easy to use once the navigation is understood
 - ↓ Most supported by vendor; outsourcing of server often available
 - ↓ Easy to set up pre-designed courses
 - ↓ Only way to go if you want to stream
 - ↓ Many come with built in usage data collection
 - ↓ Disadvantages
 - ↓ Most “optimized” for Internet Explorer (students with other browsers may have problems)
 - ↓ No “offline” capability, students must be connected to server when doing in-class work
 - ↓ Going from item to item is effectively changing web pages, tends to be slow
 - ↓ Cost (highly variable)

Online Program Implementation: Platform (“LMS”)



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↓ Client-server

↓ Advantages

- ↓ Work well in low bandwidth areas; forgiving of slow or noisy phone lines
- ↓ Offline capability
- ↓ Highly flexible
- ↓ “e-mail” feel reduces user learning curve
- ↓ Easiest approach if “community meetings” desired

↓ Disadvantages

- ↓ Can be complex on server side; server outsourcing possible but need to find experienced ASP
- ↓ Client may be added piece of software
- ↓ Need to “set up” (but this can be automated)
- ↓ Susceptible to firewall blocking
- ↓ Less usage data collection built in (but offline capability invalidates much usage data anyway)

Online Program Implementation: Platform (“LMS”)

- ↓ Host in-house or outsource?
 - ↓ Helpdesk key to student satisfaction
 - ↓ Students need help “now” not tomorrow morning
 - ↓ Frustration with system can affect enrollments
 - ↓ Complexity of server side vice IT staff capability
 - ↓ Some browser based platforms available only with hosting by vendor
- ↓ Assess your capabilities ... if you can not provide full support from inside, outsourcing is best way.
 - ↓ 24/7 helpdesk is becoming the norm
 - ↓ System up-time critical (*e.g.*, is IT staff available if system crashes at midnight?)
 - ↓ Can you add the IT staff needed to support?
 - ↓ Outsourcing allows you to piggy-back on ASP’s existing client base support

Online Program Implementation: Platform (“LMS”)



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- ↓ Host in-house or outsource?
 - ↓ Outsourcing tends to be more cost effective for small institutions, small programs, high-risk start-ups
 - ↓ In-House tends to be less costly for large programs and institutions with robust internal IT capability
- ↓ Use an RFP or RFI to sort through potential vendors
 - ↓ Define your functional user requirements
 - ↓ Get responses from multiple vendors ... don't pre-select
 - ↓ Make vendors respond to your functional needs, not promote what they want to sell to you
 - ↓ Let vendors tell you the technical side requirements
 - ↓ Use pre-set criteria to assess vendor responses
 - ↓ Check with other institutions using each proposed platform (and especially former users)

Online Program Implementation: Other issues

- ↓ Marketing/Advertising/Promotion
 - ↓ Required if strategy is outreach (no “Field of Dreams” effect)
 - ↓ Take advantage of out-of area alumni
 - ↓ Target the audience for degrees offered
 - ↓ Use faculty knowledge to identify communication channels to prospects in their fields
 - ↓ Budget enough money to do it right, but keep a tight reign on spending.
 - ↓ UIU budgets 20-25% of Online Program tuition revenue for advertising/marketing
 - ↓ Track results by endeavor

Online Program Implementation: Other issues

↓ Faculty Issues (per Chief Academic Officers)

↓ Acceptance

*FACULTY AT MY SCHOOL ACCEPT
THE VALUE AND LEGITIMACY OF
ONLINE EDUCATION*

Agree	27.5%
Neutral	57.8%
Disagree	14.7%

↓ Greater faculty time and effort required to teach online course

Source: Sloan "Making the Grade: Online Education in the United States,
2006"

Online Program Implementation: Other issues

- ↓ Faculty Issues (Cont'd)
 - ↓ Full-time or adjunct faculty?
 - ↓ Full-time
 - ↓ Helps ensure consistency with onground offerings
 - ↓ Seek volunteers, do not compel
 - ↓ Contract issues?
 - ↓ In-load or Overload?
 - ↓ Helps get buy-in to online program
 - ↓ Adjunct
 - ↓ Pool of experienced adjuncts available and growing
 - ↓ Many are tenure track at other institutions (at UIU, about 20-25% of online adjuncts)
 - ↓ Good qualifications available
 - ↓ Flexibility – facilitates growth as enrollments grow

Online Program Implementation: Other issues

- ↓ Faculty Issues (cont'd)
 - ↓ Create faculty training course for all online faculty
 - ↓ Make it mandatory
 - ↓ Online teaching is somewhat different than in-class teaching
 - ↓ Do it online
 - ↓ **Platform familiarity**
 - ↓ **Learning model indoctrination**
 - ↓ **Gives prospective online faculty opportunity to find out if it really is for them**
 - ↓ **UIU faculty training course is 6-weeks, followed by mentorship**

Online Program Implementation: Other issues

- ↓ Intellectual Property Rights
 - ↓ the parties
 - ↓ University
 - ↓ Faculty member(s)
 - ↓ Designers
 - ↓ Vendors and contractors
 - ↓ Students
 - ↓ Authors, researchers, media, etc.
 - ↓ Published materials
 - ↓ Unpublished materials
 - ↓ Law not yet stable regarding “fair use”

Online Program Implementation: Other issues

- ↓ Intellectual Property Rights (cont'd)
 - ↓ Who owns what?
 - ↓ Program design (look and feel)
 - ↓ Course design
 - ↓ Course materials
 - ↓ Lectures
 - ↓ Media and “hand outs”
 - ↓ Tests and exams
 - ↓ Student work
 - ↓ Etc.
 - ↓ Follow your institution’s policies ... do not create “online unique” policies
 - ↓ If in doubt, check with Counsel

Online Program Implementation: Lessons Learned Shared



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- ↓ An online program start-up takes more time and resource than expected.
- ↓ Expect not to operate at a surplus until year 3 at earliest. Most programs have deficits at the beginning.
- ↓ Keep as many costs as possible variable at beginning – keeps the breakeven enrollment requirement low. Add fixed costs with caution.
- ↓ Programs that failed for financial reasons tended to over-design their courses and/or over staff for the number of students ... “Keep it simple” and “Keep it lean”
- ↓ Choice of market, structure, learning model, and platform drive initial investment and operating costs. Choose wisely.



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Online Program Implementation:

- ↓ Outstanding resources: the Sloan Consortium (www.sloan-c.org) and WCET (www.wcet.info)
 - ↓ “Making the Grade: Online Education in the United States, 2006” available free at <http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/survey/index.asp>
 - ↓ The “5-pillars” (full report available for free at <http://www.sloan-c.org/effective/pillarreport1.pdf>)
 - ↓ Learning effectiveness
 - ↓ Cost effectiveness
 - ↓ Access
 - ↓ Faculty satisfaction
 - ↓ Student satisfaction
 - ↓ Sloan-C annual 2007 meeting Orlando FL
 - ↓ WCET annual 2007 meeting Atlanta GA
 - ↓ Join, attend, and network 😊



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Online Program Implementation:

- ↓ Ask other programs ... most folks willingly share
 - ↓ binderd@uiu.edu
 - ↓ 515-369-7777

- ↓ Questions, comments, observations?